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London vies with San Fran for electric car crown

Boris bigs up greener cars

by Adam Vaughan published on 1 December 2008

Boris Johnson has signalled his intent to put more electric vehicles on London's roads. At the first meeting of the London Electric Vehicle Partnership, Boris, car-makers and London boroughs signed up to a plan to develop infrastructure and incentives for EV ownership in the capital.

"Ground-based transport accounts for nearly a quarter of London's CO2 emissions but electric vehicles emit around 60% less CO2 while being charged than an internal combustion engine and zero emissions at the point of use", says Boris.

"The Mayor has already agreed to provide funding to provide more charging points across the capital", added Kulveer Ranger, the Mayor's director of transport policy.

The meeting was big on vague platitudes such as sharing best practice, but weak on specifics. The GLA said it would aim to electrify as much of its fleet as possible, but didn't set any concrete targets.

EV charging points are limited in London today, with Westminster leading with 19 within its borders. For consumers, the choice of cars is limited to two models, the G-Wiz and Mega City. New cars are expected soon, however, including the MyCar, Smart Ed, THINK City and part petrol-powered plug-in Prius (pictured).

London's plans look unambitious in the light of the San Francisco Bay area's recently-announced EV initiative. It hopes to be a Californian test-bed for electric cars by working in partnership with the Better Place project, and is aiming to become EV capital of US.

